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Application No.: 10/821,574

IN THE CLAIMS:**Please amend the original claims as follows.**

1. (Currently Amended) A hydration system comprising:
a supply of prefilled, flexible pouches having fluid therein, each of the pouches having an outlet for passing fluid from the pouch and including a check valve;
a hydration tube having two ends and removably coupled at one end to an outlet of one of the pouches; and
a user actuated valve connected at one end of the hydration tube distal from the outlet, wherein the check valve is open to allow fluid to flow from the flexible pouch when the hydration tube is coupled to the flexible pouch and the check valve is closed to prevent fluid from flowing from the flexible pouch when the hydration tube is decoupled from the flexible pouch, such that the pouch may be disconnected from the hydration tube and replaced with another pouch from the supply of prefilled, flexible pouches without leakage;
a threaded connector attached to an end of the hydration tube away from the user actuated valve; and
a quick disconnect connector including flanges attached to the threaded connector; wherein the outlet includes seat openings for accommodating the flanges and the check valve includes a spring biased valve stem.
2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each of the flexible pouches includes at least one integral thermal medium section.
3. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the user actuatable valve is a bite valve.
4. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a coupling connected to the hydration tube that includes a latch mechanism to avoid inadvertent disengagement of the hydration tube from the flexible pouch.
5. (Original) The system of claim 4, wherein said coupling is provided in-line with the tube.

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6. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 5, wherein said coupling is positioned adjacent to the outlet.
7. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 5, wherein said coupling is attached to the tube using hose barb type fittings.
8. (Original) The hydration system of claim 1 wherein the outlet is positioned substantially near the bottom of each of the flexible pouches.
9. (Withdrawn) The hydration system of claim 1 wherein each of the flexible pouches includes baffles for shape retention when filled and as the pouch is emptied.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Currently Amended) The hydration system of claim ~~10~~ 1 further comprising an O-ring connected to the quick disconnect connector.
12. (Withdrawn) The hydration system of claim 1 further comprising: an elbow connector attached to the end of tubing away from the user activated valve, the elbow connector including a male portion for engaging a portion of the check valve to cause the check valve to open when the elbow connector is attached to the outlet.
13. (Currently Amended) A method for hydrating a person comprising the steps of:
 - providing a first prefilled, flexible pouch having a potable liquid therein, the pouch having an outlet for passing liquid from the pouch and including a check valve;
 - providing a hydration tube having a first end and a second end;
 - removably coupling the hydration tube at the first end thereof to the pouch outlet, thereby opening the check valve and allowing the liquid to flow from the pouch through the hydration tube;
 - a threaded connector attached to an end of the hydration tube away from the user actuated valve; and

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a quick disconnect connector including flanges attached to the threaded connector; wherein the outlet includes seat openings for accommodating the flanges and the check valve includes a spring biased valve stem;

providing means for consuming the liquid through the second end of the hydration tube;

decoupling the first prefilled, flexible pouch from the hydration tube upon consumption of at least a portion of the liquid therefrom, the check valve precluding the liquid from flowing from the pouch upon decoupling;

providing subsequent prefilled, flexible pouches having a potable liquid therein, each pouch having an outlet for passing liquid from the pouch and including a check valve; and repeatedly coupling, consuming, and decoupling the subsequent pouches.

14. (New) A hydration system comprising:

a prefilled, flexible pouch having fluid therein, the pouch having an outlet for passing fluid from the pouch and including a check valve;

a hydration tube having two ends and removably coupled at one end to an outlet of the pouch;

a user actuated valve connected at one end of the hydration tube distal from the outlet, wherein the check valve is open to allow fluid to flow from the flexible pouch when the hydration tube is coupled to the flexible pouch and the check valve is closed to prevent fluid from flowing from the flexible pouch when the hydration tube is decoupled from the flexible pouch, such that the pouch may be disconnected from the hydration tube without leakage;

a threaded connector attached to an end of the hydration tube away from the user actuated valve; and

a quick disconnect connector including flanges attached to the threaded connector, wherein the outlet includes seat openings for accommodating the flanges and the check valve includes a spring biased valve stem.